

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-11

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11
TRSE-00 HA-05 SSM-03 /073 W
-----070039 112136Z /73

R 111212Z MAY 78
FM AMCONSUL ALEXANDRIA
TO AMEMBASSY CAIRO
INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 1721

C O N F I D E N T I A L ALEXANDRIA 0349

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, EG
SUBJ: GUMRUK BY-ELECTION DEVELOPMENTS

REF: CAIRO 12308

1. GUMRUK BY-ELECTION TO FILL THE SEAT OF SHEIKH ASHUR HAS EXCITED LITTLE GENERAL INTEREST IN ALEXANDRIA, ALTHOUGH THERE IS INCREASING ACTIVITY IN AND AROUND THE GUMRUK PORT AREA AS ELECTION DAY, MAY 17, APPROACHES. THERE HAVE BEEN SOME MEETINGS AND RALLIES IN THE DISTRICT AND IT WAS DURING ONE OF THESE MEETINGS THAT MEMBERS OF THE LEFTIST PARTY WERE ARRESTED, AS REPORTED BY AHRAM ON MAY 6 (REFTEL). ALL THESE RALLIES, WHETHER LEGALLY AUTHORIZED OR NOT, ARE APPARENTLY VERY WELL ATTENDED BY POLICE. ALTHOUGH POLICE CANNOT RESTRICT ACTIVITY OF ANY CANDIDATE TO DISTRIBUTE LITERATURE, APPARENTLY THEY HAVE NOT HESITATED TO ARREST LEFTIST PAPER, AL-AHALY, CONFIRMS THAT LEFTIST SUPPORTERS HAVE BEEN ARRESTED FOR DISTRIBUTING PARTY LITERATURE, CHARGING THAT THE POLICE APPARENTLY CONSIDER THIS LEGAL PARTY AS MORE DANGEROUS THAN A "SECRET ORGANIZATION" (I.E. COMMUNISTS)

WHO HAVE ALSO BEEN PASSING OUT LITERATURE, BUT NONE OF WHOSE MEMBERS WERE ARRESTED.

3. AL-AHALY GOES ON TO GIVE BE ON AHMED MOUSTAFA, LEFTIST
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CANDIDATE. HE BEGAN HIS CAREER AS A LABORER IN THE CUSTOMS AREA. HE ORGANIZED THE YOUNG EGYPT PARTY IN GUMRUK, WAS A MEMBER OF THE NATIONAL COMMITTEE FOR STUDENTS AND LABOR IN 1946, AND HAS SPENT MUCH OF THE TIME SINCE THEN UNDER ARREST: E.E. 1946-47, FOR THROWING A BOMB AT THE BRITISH CLUB; 1951-53 FOR DISTRIBUTING PAMPHLETS AGAINST THE BRITISH AND KING FAROUK'S REGIME; 1953-64 FOR OBJECTING TO THE DEATH SENTENCE

OF TWO LABORERS INVOLVED IN THE DEMONSTRATIONS AT KAHR EL-DAWAR;
AND 1977 FOR HIS PARTICIPATION IN THE
INFLATION RIOTS. MOUSTAFA IS THE LABOR REPRESENTATIVE AT THE
NATIONAL PAPER CO.

4. IN ITS STORY ON THE BY-ELECTION, AL-AHALY CHARACTERIZES
THE PARTY CANDIDATES' PLATFORMS AS FOLLOWS: MIDDLE PARTY
CANDIDATE: DISTRIBUTES IMPORTED T-SHIRTS; WAFD PARTY CANDIDATE:
PROCLAIMS "THE PASHA" AS LEADER OF THE EGYPTIAN NATION;
LEFTIST CANDIDATE: DEMANDS HOUSING FOR TENANTS WHOSE HOMES HAVE
COLLAPSED.

5. THE FOLLOWING ARE THE CANDIDATES IN THE GUMRUK BY-ELECTION
AS FAR AS WE HAVE BEEN ABLE TO DETERMINE, ALTHOUGH THERE MAY
BE ONE OR TWO MORE INDEPENDENT CANDIDATES THAT ARE NOT LISTED:
WAFD PARTY AHMED IZZET
MISR (CENTER) PARTY MOHAMED AHMED DIAB
LEFTIST (NATIONAL GROUPING) PARTY AHMED MOUSTAFA
INDEPENDENTS: AHMED MOHAMED AL-MASRI
ALY SOLIMAN
FOUAD HAMIDOU
MOHAMED YOUSEF MAHMOUD
ABDEL KADER AMER
EL SAYED MAHMOUD FARAH

7. KHALED MUHI AL-DIN, HEAD OF THE LEFTIST PARTY, IS SCHED-
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WILL TO DELIVER A SPEECH THIS EVENING, MAY 11, IN THE MANSHIYA
DISTRICT OF ALEXANDRIA. A PUBLIC MEETING WILL BE HELD ON
FRIDAY EVENING, MAY 12, BY THE WAFD PARTY, AND FOUAD SARAGEDDIN,
WAFD PARTY LEADER, IS SCHEDULED TO SPEAK.

8. THUS FAR, ALL OUR INFORMATION INDICATES THAT A WAFDIST
VICTORY IS LIKELY UNLESS THERE IS SOME STUFFING OF BALLOT
BOXES BY MISR (CENTER) PARTY SUPPORTERS. I HAVE APPOINTMENT
TO SEE MISR PARTY LOCAL LEADER, FAROUK GARRANA, OVER THE
WEEKEND AND WILL REPORT HIS VIEWS SHORTLY THEREAFTER.
MCCLELLAND

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: BYELECTION, ELECTION CAMPAIGNS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 11 may 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978ALEXAN00349
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780201-0090
Format: TEL
From: ALEXANDRIA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780571/aaaacifi.tel
Line Count: 105
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: f8801fa1-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 CAIRO 12308
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 15 jun 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2728884
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: GUMRUK BY-ELECTION DEVELOPMENTS
TAGS: PINT, EG
To: CAIRO
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/f8801fa1-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014